

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PHNOM 04303 101027Z

15

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 104128

O 100955Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9693

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 4303

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT MORG CB

SUBJECT: SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ STEPS DOWN FROM POSITION

C-IN-C FANK

REF: A. PHNOM PENH 4291

B. PHNOM PENH 4277

1. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS JUST INFORMED ME THAT A DELEGATION FROM THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND SENATE CALLED ON THE MARSHAL THIS MORNING (MARCH 10) AND INFORMED HIM OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSENSUS THAT KHMER MILITARY MUST BE RESTRUCTURED TO MAKE THEM RESPONSIBLE TO CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES. THE MARSHAL HAS TAKEN NOTE OF THIS DECISION AND PLANS THIS AFTERNOON TO INFORM SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ, WHO WILL UNDOUBTEDLY RESIGN RATHER THAN HAVE HIS POSITION DOWNGRADED. IN ALL FAIRNESS, IT ALSO SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ, WHILE AN ABLE MILITARY OFFICER, HAD REFUSED TO REPORT ON MILITARY MATTERS EITHER TO THE GOVERNMENT OR TO THE TWO CHAMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. HE HAD CONSIDERED HIMSELF RESPONSIBLE ONLY TO THE MARSHAL.

2. THE MARSHAL AND LONG BORET HAVE DECIDED TO MAKE LTG SAT SUTSAKHAN THE NEW CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE KHMER ARMED FORCES. HE WILL HOLD SIMULTANEOUSLY THE POSITION OF MINISTER OF DEFENSE. AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE HE WOULD HAVE TWO DEPUTIES WHO, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, WOULD CONDUCT DAILY BUSINESS AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. HOWEVER, THE NEW CHIEF OF STAFF WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 PHNOM 04303 101027Z

GOVERNMENT AND WOULD APPEAR BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT, IN

ADDITION TO BEING RESPONSIBLE TO THE MARSHAL DIRECTLY. LONG BORET CLAIMS THAT SAK SUTSAKHAN HAS THE RANK (LIEUTENANT GENERAL) AND SENIORITY SO THAT THE YOUNGER GENERALS WILL ACCEPT THIS DECISION AND NOT FIGHT AMONG THEMSELVES. SAT SUTSAKHAN IS KNOWN TO SOME OF OUR MILITARY AND RECENTLY CALLED ON GENERAL WEYAND IN WASHINGTON, WHEN SAT SUTSAKHAN WAS THERE FOR THE DEBATE AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

3. GENERAL PALMER INFORMS ME THAT SOSTHENE ALREADY KNOWS ABOUT THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND ACCEPTS THEM GRACEFULLY AND WITH EVIDENT RELIEF. HE WILL SEE THE MARSHAL LATER IN THE AFTERNOON TO GET THE WORD OFFICIALLY. LONG BORET SAID THAT THE DEATH YESTERDAY OF KHMER AMBASSADOR TO BANGKOK OPENS UP ONE OF THE AMBASSADORSHIPS. HE IS THINKING OF TRANSFERRING THE KHMER AMBASSADOR IN MANILA TO BANGKOK AND THEN OFFERING THE AMBASSADORSHIP TO THE PHILIPPINES TO SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ. SINCE FERNANDEZ'S ANCESTORS CAME FROM THE PHILIPPINES LESS THAN 100 YEARS AGO, THIS MAY APPEAL TO SOSTHENE AND WOULD BE AN ELEGANT WAY OF REWARDING HIM FOR HIS SERVICE. AWAITING THIS NEW ASSIGNMENT, SOSTHENE MAY TAKE A COUPLE OF WEEKS OF REST IN THAILAND.

4. LONG BORET STRESSED AGAIN THAT THE KHMERS INTEND TO MOVE FAST IN ORDER TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF DETERMINATION AND "NEWNESS", SO THAT MORE CIVILIANS WILL JOIN THE MILITARY RANKS AND THE MILITARY WILL FIGHT WITH GREATER VIGOR. HE THINKS THE IMPACT ON MORALE WILL BE DISTINCTLY FAVORABLE. IN ANY CASE, THE KHMERS ARE DETERMINED TO MOVE AHEAD, AND I THINK UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS BEST FOR US TO STAY OUT OF THE WAY AND WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH THE NEW TEAM WHICH ACCORDING TO LONG BORET WILL ONLY BE A REPLACEMENT FOR SOSTHENE; ALL THE OTHERS WILL REMAIN IN PLACE.  
DEAN

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 10 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975PHNOM04303  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750083-0144  
**From:** PHNOM PENH  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750366/aaaachnj.tel  
**Line Count:** 96  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** 75 PHNOM PENH 4291  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 08 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <09 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ STEPS DOWN FROM POSITION C-IN-C FANK  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PINT, MORG, PDEV, CB, (SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006